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ABSTRACT

Findings of a study that examined the effectiveness of a collaborative administrative training program are presented in this paper. The Academy Program, cosponsored by Pepperdine University and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), was approved in 1974 as a joint district-university program for the preparation of future administrators. Surveys were mailed to: (1) an unspecified number of Academy graduates who had graduated within the past 5 years and currently held assistant principalships in the LAUSD; and (2) their principals, each of whom rated the effectiveness of one Academy graduate and one nongraduate assistant principal under their supervision. Fifteen completed sets of questionnaires, or 30 responses, were received. The principals, or supervisors, rated program graduates as more successful than their non-Academy counterparts. Supervisors identified program strengths as a strong theory-practice relationship, collaborative student interaction, and the quality of recruits. Recommendations are made to continue the program, increase the university-school district interaction, increase the use of experiential instruction, and recognize the value of cohort grouping. Two charts and six tables are included. The appendix contains a copy of the questionnaire. (LMI)

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EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIVE ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING: THE PEPPERDINE - LAUSD EXPERIENCE

by

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Presented at the Annual Convention
University Council for Educational Administration
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
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EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIVE ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING: THE PEPPERDINE-LAUSD EXPERIENCE

INTRODUCTION

This paper describes a study conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of an administrative training program co-sponsored by Pepperdine University and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Known as the Academy Program this collaborative training program has been in operation since 1974. It was the first such program in the state of California approved as a joint school district-university program for the preparation of future school administrators. From the outset the cohort concept was utilized.

The Academy Program grew out of an effort by LAUSD and Pepperdine University to respond to a call from the California Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensing for reform in the way school administrators were selected and trained. School districts were encouraged to initiate cooperative training programs with universities. Concurrently the LAUSD Board of Education adopted an affirmative action policy which called for a proactive program of recruitment and training of potential administrators from under-represented groups (women and minorities).

The Human Resources Development Branch of LAUSD and the Department of Educational Administration of Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education developed a professional training program unique in its academic and clinical dimensions. Several factors distinguish the Academy Program from traditional university administrator training.

- District-University leadership and planning.
- Cohort grouping of students.
- Course curricula and content adapted to school District needs.
- Satellite class locations in addition to University campus.
- Cooperative selection of instructional staff.
- Extensive use of District administrators both as instructors and resources.
- Expanded field work in relation to District criteria and State expectations.

The Academy Program has been highly successful in recruiting and preparing administrators from under-represented groups. Over the past decade and a half the program has prepared 361 graduates who received their masters degree and the state administrative credential. Of that number 81% were women and 43% were from ethnic minority groups. The completion rate of those enrolled in the program has been 99.5%, only two candidates having failed to complete the program in its 15 year history. This completion rate is impressive when compared to the national average of 50% for administrator preparation programs. (Lindsey and Sweeney, 1988)

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Although the District and the University have continued in their joint efforts to evaluate and improve the Academy Program over its 15 year life, no formal study of the effectiveness of the program in its preparation of potential administrators for success on the job in LAUSD has been conducted in recent years. Therefore, the LAUSD Director of University-College Relations joined with two professors in educational administration at Pepperdine University to conduct a survey of the opinions of a stratified sample of LAUSD administrators. Data was gathered during the months of May and June, 1990, in an effort to assess the effectiveness of the Academy in producing graduates who meet the competency criteria set by the District for its administrators.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

It was hypothesized that on-site supervisors of Academy graduates in full -time administrative positions in LAUSD would hold valuable perceptions of their subordinates' administrative competencies which are linked to components in the Academy Program. These estimations of strengths and weaknesses compared with those of administrators who are non-Academy graduates and with self-evaluations by Academy graduates would identify differences between and among the components and suggest program modifications.

The study used an item analysis model to evaluate the effectiveness of the administrative training program. A survey of selected graduates of the Academy Program and their supervisors was conducted. A ten step Likert-type questionnaire designed to link administrative competencies to program components and to measure professional performance was used. (See

Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire. The questionnaire is a modification of one used previously by one of the authors in a similar study conducted earlier in association with California State University, Los Angeles.)

Using the questionnaire the supervisors were asked to rate the Academy graduates and job-alike non-Academy graduates on their effectiveness as administrators. The graduates were asked to rate their effectiveness according to their own perceptions, as well.

Items one through fourteen in the questionnaire constitute the District criteria for the promotion, evaluation, and training of administrative personnel. (Dimensions of Behavior, 1988). The development of these criteria was and remains predicated upon an intensive job analysis of school administrative positions - an analysis extending over a three year period and involving over three hundred school site administrators.

Items fifteen through seventeen asked for an assessment of the respondent of the overall effectiveness of the administrator being rated, judgment of most effective aspects of the training program and suggestions for improvement of the program.

ASSUMPTIONS

Three assumptions underlie this study: (1) Supervisors' perceptions of Academy Graduates' administrative competencies are a valid indicator of program effectiveness; (2) Academy Graduates and Job-Alikes represent close pairs in as much as each group has had similar administrator training consonant with requirements legislated by the State and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing; and (3) the research design will discriminate for significant differences among the components and provide initial data for program improvement.

CONDUCT OF THE RESEARCH

The University in consultation with the District identified those graduates of the Academy within the past five years who currently hold full-time administrative positions in LAUSD (assistant principals). Each of the graduates was asked to complete the survey questionnaire and to facilitate the study by securing the participation of their immediate supervisor (see

Appendix B). Supervisors (Principals) were asked to complete two identical questionnaires, one each for the Academy Graduate and an assistant principal who is not a graduate of the Academy whom they have supervised. Fifteen usable completed sets of questionnaires were returned in time to be included in this analysis.

FINDINGS

NUMBER ONE. The perceptions of supervisors provided evidence to suggest a higher degree of effectiveness of the administrator preparation of Academy Gradutes (AG) in comparison to non-Academy prepared Job-Alikes (NAG). (See Tables 1 and 2 and Chart A.)

The ratings of supervisors indicates an overall superiority of the performance of AGs when compared to Job-Alikes. On items 1-14, AGs were rated an average of 8.3 compared to NAGs who were rated an average of 7.3. (See Table 3)

On item 15, Overall Effectiveness as an Administrator, the supervisors of Academy Graduates (SAG) rated them as 8.7 as compared to 7.1 for Job-Alikes. (See Table 4)

Ths SAGs gave the highest ratings to item 4, Extra-organizational Sensitivity (8.9), and item 14, Written Communication (9.1). The lowest items were item 6, Delegation and Follow-up 8.2), item 9, Instructional Leadership (8.2) and item 10, Leadership and Influence (8.3). (See Table 5)

NUMBER TWO. The self-evaluations of the Academy Graduates provide another dimension of program effectiveness. The Academy Graduates averaged 8.7 in their self-ratings. They ranked themselves highest on item 4, Extra-organizational Sensitivity (9.3). They rated themselves 9.0 or better on 5 items: item 4, Extra-organizational Sensitivity (9.3), item 5, Planning and Organizing (9), item 12, Initiative and Innovativeness (9), and item 14, Written Communication (9.2). (See Table 6)

NUMBER THREE. The degree of congruence between the perceptions and ratings of the Academy Graduates and the Supervisors of the Academy Graduates provided another measure of the effectiveness of the program. (See Chart B)

On 4 items the average differential in ratings between the Academy Graduates and the Supervisors of Academy Graduates ranged from 0 to .2. Both the Academy Graduates and their Supervisors were congruent (0) on item 2, Judgment (9.5), and item 9, Development of Staff Members (7.7). On item 15, Overall Effectiveness as an Administrator, the AGs and SAGs rating was 8.7 and 8.6 respectively.

NUMBER FOUR. Of the 30 respondents, 20 completed item 16, What Aspects of the LAUSD-Pepperdine University Academy Program do you feel contributed most strongly to the success of the graduates? Among the comments were the following:

a. Most often mentioned by graduates of the program was the relationship with the school district and the ensuing mix of theory and practice with an orientation toward the practical. This relationship was based upon the use of outstanding district personnel as speakers, instructors and mentors who provided a valuable personalization of the second largest school district in the US. The curriculum of the programs was judged to be effective as it incorporated the skills and knowledge required of new administrators and the specific competencies used for the selection and promotion to administrative positions.

b. The second most often mentioned factor was the collaborative (rather than competitive) relationship among the students. The "group togetherness" and the "strength of other students" were comments that illustrated the value of the cohort grouping of a small, highly selective group of candidates that go through a concentrated program together.

c. Aspects most often mentioned by supervisors were the selection of candidates for the program and the relationship of the University program to the District. The initial selection of a small number of candidates with "poise, initiative and potential" was viewed as the major factor in the success of the graduates of the program. A second major factor cited was the rapport with and the interaction between and among students, their University instructors and District personnel.

NUMBER FIVE. Eighteen of the 30 respondents completed item 17, What recommendations would you make for improving the LAUSD-Pepperdine University Academy Program. Recommendations suggested included:

a. Continue the use of site administrators and other District personnel as speakers and instructors and evaluate all faculty to ensure consistent and high level instruction.

b. Incorporate the use of "shadowing" of strong assistant principals as mentors.

c. Increase the emphasis on decision making skills, the change process and the evaluation of teachers.

d. Increase the use of simulation and structured activities in courses to improve the teaching/learning process and to sustain the practical value of the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon an analysis of the findings the researchers make the following recommendations:

a. The Academy program should be continued as the graduates of the Academy were rated as more successful as new administrators than non-Academy graduates.

b. The aspects of the Academy program that were considered as contributing strongly to the success of the graduates should be continued and all involved university personnel be made aware of these items to ensure their proper emphasis.

c. The Academy program success factors should be incorporated in other administrator preparation programs offered by the University.

d. Action should be taken by the University to sustain and increase the interaction between the University and LAUSD. These actions should include identifying and working closely with the District administrator assigned as liaison with the University. Outstanding site administrators and other District personnel need to be identified and utilized as speakers, seminar leaders, mentors and instructors.

e. The results of the study indicated a need for ensuring the curriculum content be reality based, where theory is properly balanced with the practical

needs of today's demands on school administrators.

f. Efforts should be made by the University to recognize the value and the need to increase the use of experiential type instruction (simulations, structured activities, on-site projects, etc.) to increase the learning as well as the application of the program content to the needs of school administrators.

g. It is recommended that the University recognize the value of the Academy selection process and cohort grouping. Both Program graduates and their supervisors identified these items as a major influence on the success of the graduates. It is recommended that these procedures be continued and adapted for use in the other administrator preparation programs in the University.

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TABLES

TABLE 1

SUPERVISOR OF ACADEMY GRADUATE (SAG) RESPONSES

Ques.	SAG-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Avg.
1	8	9	8	10	8	10	9	7	10	5	9	10	10	7	10	8.7
2	8	10	8	10	9	10	9	7	10	6	8	10	10	8	10	8.7
3	5	10	9	10	8	10	10	6	8	8	9	10	10	8	10	8.7
4	6	9	7	10	9	10	10	7	10	9	8	10	10	10	8	8.9
5	6	10	9	10	8	10	9	7	10	9	7	10	10	5	10	8.7
6	4	9	8	10	8	10	9	7	8	6	8	10	10	6	10	8.2
7	7	9	7	10	8	10	10	7	10	6	8	10	10	7	9	8.5
8	7	9	8	10	8	10	9	6	10	6	8	10	10	7	9	8.5
9	5	10	9	10	9	10	10	7	10	7	8	10	10	5	10	8.3
10	5	10	7	10	8	9	10	7	10	7	9	10	10	4	8	8.3
11	6	9	9	10	9	10	10	6	10	7	9	10	10	3	10	8.5
12	5	10	7	10	8	10	9	7	10	7	9	10	10	6	10	8.5
13	6	10	8	10	9	9	9	7	10	7	9	10	10	6	10	8.7
14	8	9	10	10	8	10	9	8	10	9	9	10	10	6	10	9.1
Avg.	6.1	9.5	8.1	10	8.4	9.9	9.4	6.9	9.7	7.1	8.4	10	10	6.3	9.5	

TABLE 2

SUPERVISOR OF NON ACADEMY GRADUATE (SNAG) RESPONSES

QUES	SNAG 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	AVG.
1	2	8	9	7	7	7	8	8	10	5	7	5	5	9	10	7.3
2	5	8	8	8	7	7	8	9	10	7	7	3	3	9	10	7.3
3	4	9	8	6	7	8	9	10	10	8	8	8	8	9	10	8.1
4	6	10	8	7	8	6	10	9	10	8	8	2	2	8	8	7.3
5	2	9	7	9	8	7	8	10	10	8	7	6	6	8	10	7.7
6	6	10	8	8	7	6	8	10	10	7	7	3	3	5	10	7.3
7	2	9	8	7	8	6	8	10	10	6	8	5	5	8	9	7.3
8	4	9	7	8	8	7	8	8	10	6	8	5	5	9	9	7.3
9	2	10	7	5	7	6	8	8	10	6	7	4	4	5	10	6.6
10	4	10	8	7	7	6	9	9	10	7	8	2	2	7	8	6.9
11	2	9	7	6	7	6	8	10	10	7	7	3	3	7	10	6.8
12	2	9	8	8	8	7	8	9	10	6	8	3	3	6	10	7
13	7	10	8	7	7	8	8	9	10	6	7	4	4	10	10	7.7
14	6	10	9	8	8	7	8	9	10	8	8	3	3	10	10	7.8
AVG	3.9	9.3	7.9	7.2	7.4	6.7	8.3	9.1	10	6.8	7.5	4	4	7.9	9.6	

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF AG, SAG & SNAG AVERAGE RATINGS

AG/SAG/SNAG #	AG	SAG	SNAG
1	8.5	6.2	3.8
2	9.5	9.5	9.3
3	8.2	8.1	7.8
4	9.8	10	7.2
5	9.6	8.4	7.4
6	8.7	9.9	6.7
7	8.2	9.4	8.2
8	9.1	6.9	9.1
9	9.7	9.7	10
10	7.9	7.1	6.8
11	7.9	8.5	7.5
12	8.4	10	4
13	9.1	10	4
14	8.1	6.3	7.8
15	8.4	9.5	9.5
AVG.	8.7	8.6	7.1

TABLE 4

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS AS ADMINISTRATOR

RESP. #	AG	SAG	SNAG
1	8	7	3
2	9	9	10
3	8	8	7
4	10	10	7
5	10	9	7
6	9	10	7
7	9	9	8
8	9	7	9
9	10	10	10
10	8	7	7
11	8	9	7
12	9	10	4
13	9	10	4
14	8	7	8
15	8	9	9
AVG.	8.6	8.7	7.1

TABLE 5

SUPERVISOR OF ACADEMY GRADUATE (SAG) RESPONSES

QUES.	SAG-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	AVG.
1	8	9	8	10	8	10	9	7	10	5	9	10	10	7	10	8.7
2	8	10	8	10	9	10	9	7	10	6	8	10	10	8	10	8.7
3	5	10	9	10	8	10	10	6	8	8	9	10	10	8	10	8.7
4	6	9	7	10	9	10	10	7	10	9	8	10	10	10	8	8.9
5	6	10	9	10	8	10	9	7	10	9	7	10	10	5	10	8.7
6	4	9	8	10	8	10	9	7	8	6	8	10	10	6	10	8.2
7	7	9	7	10	8	10	10	7	10	6	8	10	10	7	9	8.5
8	7	9	8	10	8	10	9	6	10	6	8	10	10	7	9	8.5
9	5	10	9	10	9	10	10	7	10	7	8	10	10	5	10	8.3
10	5	10	7	10	8	9	10	7	10	7	9	10	10	4	8	8.3
11	6	9	9	10	9	10	10	6	10	7	9	10	10	3	10	8.5
12	5	10	7	10	8	10	9	7	10	7	9	10	10	6	10	8.5
13	6	10	8	10	9	9	9	7	10	7	9	10	10	6	10	8.7
14	8	9	10	10	8	10	9	8	10	9	9	10	10	6	10	9.1
AVG.	6.1	9.5	8.1	10	8.4	9.9	9.4	6.9	9.7	7.1	8.4	10	10	6.3	9.5	

TABLE 6

ACADEMY GRADUATE (AG) RESPONSES

QUES.	AG-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	AVG.
1	7	9	7	10	10	9	8	9	10	6	8	9	8	8	8	8.4
2	8	10	8	10	10	9	9	8	10	7	8	9	9	8	7	8.7
3	8	10	8	10	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
4	9	9	9	10	10	9	9	9	10	10	9	9	10	9	8	9.3
5	8	10	8	10	10	10	7	10	10	10	6	9	9	8	10	9
6	9	9	8	9	10	8	8	8	9	7	7	8	8	8	9	8.3
7	10	9	9	9	9	9	8	10	10	6	7	6	9	8	9	8.5
8	8	9	9	9	9	8	8	10	9	7	6	7	8	8	7	8.1
9	9	10	9	10	9	8	8	9	10	8	7	8	9	7	8	8.6
10	8	10	8	10	10	8	9	9	10	8	9	8	10	8	7	8.8
11	8	9	8	10	10	9	8	9	10	8	8	7	9	8	6	8.5
12	9	10	7	10	9	9	8	9	10	7	9	10	10	8	10	9
13	9	10	8	10	9	8	9	9	9	7	9	9	9	8	10	8.9
14	10	9	9	10	9	8	8	10	10	10	8	9	10	8	10	9.2
15	8	9	8	10	10	9	8	9	10	8	8	9	9	8	8	8.7
AVG.	8.6	9.5	8.2	9.8	9.6	8.6	8.3	9.1	9.7	7.9	7.9	8.4	9.1	8.1	8.4	

CHARTS

CHART A

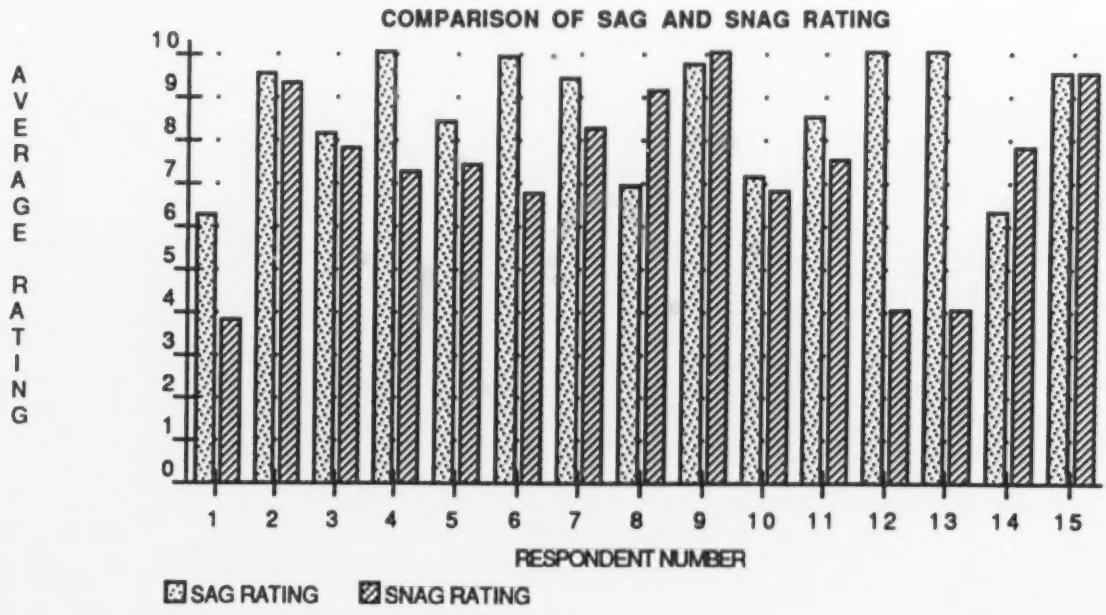
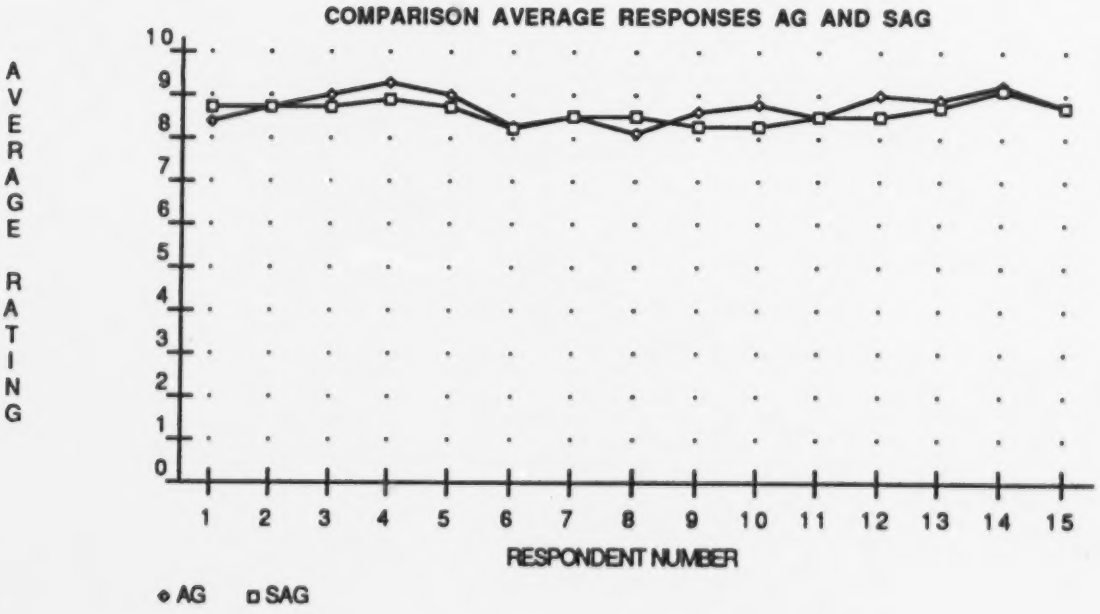


CHART B



APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT-PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY ACADEMY PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

The LAUSD-Pepperdine Cooperative Administrative Academy Program has been operating since September 1974. Pepperdine University in cooperation with the District has been afforded the opportunity to present an evaluative study of the program at the annual meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration in early Fall 1990.

To make this presentation data are being collected from selected Academy graduates and their respective supervisors. The items used assess the competency of Academy graduates are adaptations of the Dimensions of Behaviors from the LAUSD promotional selection and assessment process.

We are most grateful for your participation in this project and will keep your individual responses confidential.

RESPONDENT CODE #_____

PLEASE RETURN THIS TO DR. ROBERT DE VRIES BY JUNE 1, 1990, SCHOOL MAIL, 450 NORTH GRAND, H-132.

DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT

ACADEMY GRADUATES please evaluate the current level of your competency on each of the following administrative tasks and responsibilities (dimensions). SUPERVISORS, please complete two evaluations, one for your Academy Graduate and one for an Assistant Principal who is not an Academy graduate. On a rating scale of 1 to 10, with 10 the strongest, indicate the appropriate number before each of the following items.

Weakest _____ Strongest

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

DECISION-MAKING DIMENSION

1._____ **ANALYSIS:** identifying issues and problems, securing relevant information, relating and comparing data from different sources and identifying cause/effect relationships.

2._____ **JUDGMENT:** developing alternative courses of action and making the decisions which reflect factual information, are based on logical assumptions, and take organizational resources into consideration.

3._____ **DECISIVENESS:** readily implementing decisions, rendering judgment, and taking appropriate action.

4._____ **EXTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL SENSITIVITY:** assessing the impact and implication of decisions on various ethnic groups; understanding of and sensitivity to various cultural and ethnic groups.

MANAGEMENT DIMENSION

5._____ **PLANNING AND ORGANIZING:** establishing a course of action for self and/or others to accomplish a specific goal; planning the proper assignment of personnel and appropriate allocation of resources.

6._____ **DELEGATION AND FOLLOW-UP:** using the staff fully and effectively; allocating decision-making and other responsibilities to the appropriate staff member with follow-up.

7._____ **KNOWLEDGE OF CURRICULAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPTS, PROGRAM, AND STRATEGIES:** understanding the major issues in American school curriculum and instruction; appropriately interpreting and applying pedagogical methods; integrating the principles of human growth and development into the course of study; and coordinating the roles of staff, parents, pupils, and community in the total educational enterprise.

8._____ **KNOWLEDGE OF DISTRICT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:** thorough working understanding of the regulations which guide District operations including legal mandates and budgetary guidelines (includes categorical projects and contract administration).

9._____ **DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF MEMBERS:** developing the skills and competencies of staff members; assessing career potential; providing development and training activities to enhance performance in current and future jobs.

10._____ **LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE:** using appropriate interpersonal styles and methods in guiding individuals and groups toward task accomplishment; building cohesiveness and cooperation among members of the school community; facilitating group process and the resolution of conflict.

11._____ **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP:** combining a knowledge of instructional methods with an appropriate interpersonal style to systematically assess instructional needs; and to develop, implement, and monitor the effectiveness of an instructional program that fully responds to identified goals and priorities.

PERSONAL DIMENSION

12._____ **INITIATIVE AND INNOVATIVENESS:** self-starting rather than passively accepting; taking action to achieve goals beyond that which is called for routinely; originating action; and developing unique and creative solutions to complex problems.

COMMUNICATION DIMENSION

13._____ **ORAL COMMUNICATION:** effectively expressing in individual and group situations when delivering prepared remarks and when speaking extemporaneously (includes organization, gestures, and non-verbal communication).

14._____ **WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:** clearly expressing ideas in writing in good grammatical form (includes the plan or format of the communication).

GENERAL

15._____ **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS AS AN ADMINISTRATOR:** assessing how well you are (or the individual is) performing against the current district standards for that position, considering the experience factor.

• • • • • • • • •

16. What aspects of the LAUSD-Pepperdine University Academy Program do you feel contribute most strongly to the success of the graduates?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

17. What recommendations would you make for improving the LAUSD-Pepperdine University Academy Program ?

_____

_____

_____